UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General, in report on agenda for development, says General Assembly's fiftieth session should focus on forging new framework for development cooperation; stresses need for more integrated, efficient and effective structure for United Nations assistance.

- Security Council expresses alarm at escalation of fighting in Bihac area; condemns violation of border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina by Krajina Serb forces.

- Fighting continues around Bihac as Bosnian Serbs reverse recent Bosnian Government gains; Special Representative for former Yugoslavia meets with authorities in Sarajevo and Pale.

- General Assembly includes sub-item on capital punishment in current agenda, by 70 votes in favour to 24 against, with 42 abstentions; allocates it to Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee as human rights issue.

- Secretary-General to pay brief visit to Haiti tomorrow, followed by stay in Jamaica.

- RENAMO President says he accepts results of Mozambican elections; Secretary-General recommends extension of ONUMOZ mandate until installation of new Government.

- Assembly of International Seabed Authority to begin first session in Jamaica on Wednesday, as United Nations Convention on Law of Sea enters into force.

- African regional preparatory meeting for 1995 World Conference on Women to be held in Dakar from 16 to 23 November.

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The fiftieth session of the General Assembly should focus international attention on forging a new framework for development cooperation, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a report on his agenda for development dated 11 November, he said that an effective multilateral development system required that the unique role of the United Nations be

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supported. He cited the Organization's universality and unmatched network, and its capacity to build consensus, inform policy, and help rationalize public and private development efforts.

The Assembly should identify critical issues and serve as a forum for discussion of emerging problems, he continued. It should focus on improving the management of global interdependence and promoting an integrated approach to economic and social development. It should also consider holding special sessions on major aspects of international cooperation for development, and convening an international conference on the financing of development.

He stressed the need for a more integrated, efficient and effective structure for United Nations development assistance. The Economic and Social Council must be revitalized to fulfil the role envisaged for it in the Charter. Cooperation between the Organization and the Bretton Woods institutions should be enhanced through joint initiatives, such as poverty reduction strategies, sustainable energy development and post-conflict peace-building. United Nations development must be supported by adequate financial resources, he said, adding that reliance on voluntary contributions alone was no longer feasible.

Three principles were fundamental, the Secretary-General concluded. More resources were needed; mandates and the resources provided for them must be balanced; and predictable funding must be secured so that operations were not undermined in the midst of performance.

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The Security Council has expressed alarm at the escalation in fighting in the Bihac area of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the resulting flow of refugees and displaced persons. In a statement read out by its President, Madeleine Albright (United States), yesterday, the Council condemned any violation of the international border between Croatia and Bosnia and demanded that all concerned, particularly "the so-called Krajina Serb forces", fully respect that border and refrain from hostile acts across it.

The Council emphasized the significance of its "safe areas" resolutions and demanded that all concerned facilitate their implementation. It called on all concerned to abstain from any action that could cause a further escalation in the fighting. The Council demanded that they immediately ensure, in cooperation with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), unimpeded access for humanitarian supplies. It called on the parties to respect UNPROFOR's safety and freedom of movement, and requested the Secretary-General to report as soon as possible on any further measures to stabilize the situation in Bihac, drawing on UNPROFOR's experience in the safe areas.

Council resolution 824 (1993) of 6 May declared six Bosnian towns, including Bihac, and their surroundings "safe areas" and authorized a strengthening of UNPROFOR to monitor the humanitarian situation in them. It also declared its readiness, in the event of a violation, to consider additional measures with a view to the resolution's full implementation.

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There has been intense fighting on a plateau overlooking the town of Bihac as Bosnian Serb forces continue to win back territory taken in a recent Bosnian Government offensive, a United Nations spokesman said today. Meanwhile, the Special Representative for the former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, has had meetings with the authorities in Sarajevo and Pale in an effort to resolve the situation.

The Bosnian Government agreed to remove the last of its troops from the Mount Igman demilitarized zone in exchange for an increase in the number of United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) patrols and observation posts there, the spokesman continued. The Bosnian Serbs agreed to cooperate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regarding access for convoys, but little progress was made regarding UNPROFOR convoys. Mr. Akashi was scheduled to meet today with Croatian President Franjo Tudjman for a general review of the situations in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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The General Assembly today included a new sub-item on capital punishment in its current agenda, by a vote of 70 in favour to 24 against, with 42 abstentions. The Assembly also decided, by a separate vote of 69 in favour to 25 against, with 37 abstentions, that the new sub-item would be dealt with under the item on human rights questions, and would be considered by the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural).

During the discussion on the item on capital punishment, the representative of Italy said his country, as a primary initiator of the item, had, in the spirit of consensus, agreed to its inclusion as a sub-item under human rights questions. However, it could not agree to the proposal to allocate it to the Sixth Committee (Legal), rather than the Third Committee, as that would not allow time for a full and proper debate of the issue, which had traditionally been a human rights question. Opposing its inclusion and allocation to the Third Committee, the Sudanese representative said that capital punishment was a divine matter, and that its abolition was a question of national sovereignty.

Also today, the Assembly reviewed the first report of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Introducing the report, Tribunal President Antonio Cassese said the establishment of Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda raised the hope that the United Nations would eventually establish a permanent criminal court to deal with outrages against humanity.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali will leave Headquarters tomorrow for a visit to Haiti lasting two or three hours, according to a United Nations

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spokesman. The Secretary-General will then proceed to Jamaica, where he will meet with Government officials and address the first session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority.

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The President of the Mozambique National Resistance Movement (RENAMO), Afonso Dhlakama, today informed the Secretary-General that although he thought there had been irregularities in the conduct of the recent elections, he had accepted their results. He stressed that he was in favour of peace and national reconciliation, and that he was prepared to cooperate with the Government of Mozambique in the post-election period.

Meanwhile, the Secretary-General has recommended that the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) be extended for technical reasons until the installation of the new Government. In a letter to the President of the Security Council dated 9 November, he said that was expected to take place by 15 December, following publication of the results of the elections. He recalled that Special Representative Aldo Ajello had issued a preliminary statement saying that voting had been peaceful and free of major irregularities, and paid tribute to the people of Mozambique and the staff of ONUMOZ for that remarkable achievement.

The Secretary-General went on to say that ONUMOZ would continue its present functions of good offices, as well as its verification and monitoring activities. The overall framework for the withdrawal of the Operation by the end of January would remain in effect, but with appropriate adjustments for some military and police observers. He added that those adjustments would have no significant financial implications.

A United Nations spokesman today said that the final results of the elections might be released on Wednesday. He noted that vote counting was behind schedule in some provinces.

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The Assembly of the International Seabed Authority will hold the first part of its inaugural session in Kingston, Jamaica, from 16 to 18 November. The opening day of the session coincides with the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The occasion is expected to be largely commemorative, with addresses by the Secretary-General and by a number of heads of State or Government.

The Assembly will resume the session from 27 February to 17 March 1995, when it is expected to begin its substantive work. It will begin with the election of members of the Council of the Authority and the adoption of rules of procedures.

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The African regional preparatory meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995, will take place in Dakar from 16 to 23 November. The meeting will be held at two levels: a meeting of experts from 16 to 20 November, and a ministerial conference from 21 to 23 November. It will be attended by representatives of governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations.

The inaugural expert meeting will review implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000, adopted at the Third World Conference on Women in 1985. It will also discuss and finalize the African common position for the advancement of women, which is expected to be adopted at the ministerial conference.

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